

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) Base particles for supporting a surfactant, obtainable by spray-drying a slurry comprising a water-soluble polymer (A), an inhibitor for forming a coating film (B) and a water-soluble salt (C) other than the inhibitor for forming a coating film, wherein the surfactant is contained in an amount of from 0 to 3% by weight of the base particles; and

wherein a weight ratio of the water-soluble polymer to the inhibitor for forming a coating film in a base particle constituting the base particles, that is water-soluble polymer/inhibitor for forming a coating film, is from 0.1 to 100.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) The base particles according to claim 1 ~~or~~ 2, wherein the slurry further comprises a water-insoluble inorganic compound (D).

4. (Currently Amended) The base particles according to claim 1 ~~or~~ 2, wherein the inhibitor for forming a coating film is an alkali metal halide.

5. (Currently Amended) The base particles according to claim 1 ~~or~~ 2, wherein the inhibitor for forming a coating film exists on the surface of a base particle and/or its vicinity.

6. (Currently Amended) The base particles according to claim 1 ~~or~~ 2, wherein the inhibitor for forming a coating film exists as crystals in the base particle.

7. (Currently Amended) Base particles for supporting a surfactant, obtainable by spray-drying a slurry comprising at least a water-soluble polymer (A) and an alkali metal halide, wherein a surfactant is contained in an amount of from 0 to 3% by weight of the base particles, and wherein a weight ratio of the water-soluble polymer to the alkali metal halide in a base particle constituting the base particles, that is water-soluble polymer/alkali metal halide, is from 0.1 to 100.

8. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing base particles for supporting a surfactant, the base particles containing ~~the~~ a surfactant in an amount of from 0 to 3% by weight, comprising the step of spray-drying a slurry comprising a water-soluble polymer (A), an inhibitor for forming a coating film (B) and a water-soluble salt (C) other than the inhibitor for forming a

coating film, wherein a dissolution ratio of Component (B) in the slurry is at a level sufficient to inhibit formation of a coating film on the surface of the resulting base particles.

9. (Currently Amended) Detergent particles having an average particle size of from 150 to 750 μm and a bulk density of 500g/L or more, wherein 1 to 100 parts by weight of a surfactant is supported in 100 parts by weight of base particles for supporting the surfactant, obtainable by spray-drying a slurry comprising a water-soluble polymer (A), an inhibitor for forming a coating film (B) and a water-soluble salt (C) other than the inhibitor for forming a coating film, wherein ~~the~~ a surfactant is contained in an amount of from 0 to 10% by weight of the base particles.

10. (Currently Amended) The detergent particles according to claim 9, wherein the detergent particles have an uni-core property.

11. (Previously Amended) A detergent composition comprising the detergent particles of claim 9 or 10.

12. (Currently Amended) The base particles according to claim 1 ~~or~~ 2, wherein the inhibitor (B) is selected from the group

consisting of halides of alkali metals and halides of alkali earth metals.

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contg 13. (Previously Added) The detergent particles according to claim 9 or 10, wherein the inhibitor (B) is selected from the group consisting of halides of alkali metals and halides of alkali earth metals.
